

civic events and for such organized recreational activities as softball and picnicking. As the community recreational facility, the town park should be located in conjunction with another community facility that serves as a focal point for town residents, such as a town hall, school, or fire station. Towns which currently lack park and outdoor recreation facilities should have the opportunity to acquire and develop, with available Federal and State grant-in-aid support, one town park and associated recreation facilities.

Maintenance of Existing Park and Outdoor Recreation Sites: It is important to note that, in addition to recommendations relating to the provision of new park sites and facilities, this plan anticipates the maintenance in continued recreational use of existing publicly owned recreation sites within the County. Maintenance activities at these sites should include, as necessary, such activities as the provision, paving, and resurfacing of parking lots and walkways; resurfacing of volleyball, basketball, and tennis court areas; provision, repair, or replacement of such support facilities as sportsfield lighting, park benches, picnic tables, and drinking fountains; provision, repair, or replacement of rest rooms, water supply facilities, maintenance buildings, and picnic shelters; and the maintenance of lawns, gardens, and other landscape plantings. Maintenance activities also include, importantly, the retrofitting of facilities where necessary to accommodate access by persons with disabilities.

The Federal Americans with Disabilities Act, adopted by the U. S. Congress in 1990, requires that "reasonable accommodation" be made to provide persons with disabilities equal opportunities for access to jobs, transportation, public facilities, and services, including access to recreational facilities. All new or renovated park and recreation facilities within the County must be designed and constructed to comply with the requirements of the Act. Existing public park and recreation facilities should be evaluated by the unit of government concerned to determine if improvements are needed to meet Federal accessibility requirements.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The recommended park and open space plan for Waukesha County consists of an outdoor recreation element providing recommendations for parks and other outdoor recreation facilities and an open space preservation element providing recommendations for the protection of important natural resource

features. The recommended plan described in the preceding sections of this chapter provides a design for the attainment of the specific park acquisition and development objectives and the open space preservation objectives presented in Appendix G of this report. In a practical sense, however, the recommended park and open space plan for the County is not complete until the steps required to implement the plan have been specified. The remainder of this chapter is intended to serve as a guide for use in the implementation of the recommended plan, including a description of those actions required by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and by Waukesha County and a description of the acquisition and development costs and priorities associated with the implementation of the recommended plan. A summary of acquisition and development costs is provided in Table 161.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has authority and responsibility for park development, natural resource protection, water quality control, and water use regulations. Because of this broad range of authority and responsibility, certain Department functions have particular importance in the implementation of the County park and open space plan. The Department has the obligation to prepare a comprehensive statewide conservation and water resource plans; the authority to protect, develop, and regulate the use of state parks, forests, fish and game, lakes and streams, certain plant life, and other resources; and the authority to acquire conservation and scenic easements. The Department also has the authority to administer the Federal grant program known as the Land and Water Conservation (LAWCON) Fund program within the State, and administers the State Stewardship Fund, which provides funding for County and local park and open space land acquisition and development. The Department also has the obligation to establish standards for floodplain and shoreland zoning and the authority to adopt, in the absence of satisfactory local actions, shoreland and floodplain zoning ordinances.

It is important that the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources approve and adopt the County park and open space plan in order to maintain the eligibility of the County to receive available State and Federal outdoor recreation grants in support of plan implementation. The Department should also use available regulatory authority to guide urban development in accordance with the general location and extent of the recommended urban service areas

Table 161

**SUMMARY OF ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT COSTS FOR
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WAUKESHA COUNTY PARK AND OPEN SPACE PLAN**

Level or Agency of Government	Major Parks			Areawide Trails			Boat Access Sites		
	Acquisition	Development	Total	Acquisition	Development	Total	Acquisition	Development	Total
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources	-- ^a	-- ^b	-- ^a	\$155,000	\$ 45,000	\$ 200,000	\$1,900,000	\$530,000	\$2,430,000
Waukesha County	\$5,562,000 ^c	\$22,884,000	\$28,446,000	20,000 ^d	2,593,500	2,613,500	--	--	-- ^e
Local Government ^{f,g}	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Nonprofit Conservation Organization	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total	\$5,562,000	\$22,884,000	\$28,446,000	\$175,000	\$2,638,500	\$2,813,500	\$1,900,000	\$530,000	\$2,430,000

Level or Agency of Government	Open Space Preservation			Total		
	Acquisition	Development	Total	Acquisition	Development	Total
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources	\$21,275,000	-- ^b	\$21,275,000	\$23,330,000	\$ 575,000	\$ 23,905,000
Waukesha County	21,779,000	--	21,779,000	27,361,000	25,477,500	52,838,500
Local Government ^{f,g}	28,816,000	--	28,816,000	28,816,000	--	28,816,000
Nonprofit Conservation Organization	5,250,000	--	5,250,000	5,250,000	--	5,250,000
Total	\$77,120,000	--	\$77,120,000	\$84,757,000	\$26,052,500	\$110,809,500

NOTE: All costs are expressed in 1996 dollars.

^aAdditional land acquisitions by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, other than boat-access sites, are included in the open space preservation category.

^bDevelopment costs for Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources lands will be determined by the Department.

^cThe cost of acquiring about 850 acres of primary environmental corridor, secondary environmental corridor, and isolated natural resource areas within new County major parks or proposed additions to such parks is included in the major parks category.

^dThe cost of acquiring lands for trails within proposed parkways is included in the open space preservation category.

^eThe cost of providing two Fox River canoe-access sites is included in the major park category.

^fIncludes cities, villages, towns, school districts, and lake or sanitary districts.

^gProviding major parks, areawide trails, and boat-access sites is the responsibility of the State and County levels of government. As such, no costs are assigned to local governments for such sites and facilities. All levels of government share in the responsibility for preserving areas with important natural resources; therefore, this County park and open space plan recommends that certain such areas be acquired by local governments. Local governments should be responsible for providing local parks and trails, as called for in locally adopted park and open space plans.

Source: SEWRPC.

identified in the plan and to preserve and protect important natural resource features to enhance environmental quality in the County. Finally, the Department should be directly responsible for the maintenance of existing State-owned recreation and open space sites in the County; the acquisition of resource preservation sites, including natural areas and critical species habitat sites, as recommended in this chapter; and the acquisition and development of boat-access sites as recommended in this Chapter. A summary of the costs associated with recommendations directed to the Department is included in Table 161.

Waukesha County

The authority and responsibility for the provision of areawide park and open space sites and facilities

in the County rests primarily with the Waukesha County Park and Planning Commission. A summary of the park acquisition and development and open space preservation recommendations for the County is included in Table 161.²⁵

²⁵It should be noted that the costs associated with implementation of the County park plan may be offset through grants provided for recreational and open space purposes by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The acquisition and development costs for recreational and open space lands and facilities may also be offset by donations, land dedications, or by revenues generated by existing parks and recreational facilities.

Under the recommended park and open space plan, Waukesha County should acquire additional land at six existing major park sites and develop additional facilities at all 12 existing major county park sites, acquire and develop two proposed new major county parks, and develop additional facilities at four other county sites.

As previously noted, application of the per capita standards for major park sites to the anticipated County population levels for both the year 2010 and under buildout conditions indicate the County currently has an adequate amount of major park land and sites to serve future County residents. This gross calculation, however, does not take into account that each park site must contain sufficient developable land, that is, areas with suitable soils and slopes, to accommodate needed recreational facilities and activities, and that much of the area within existing major parks consists of lands which should not be developed for intensive recreational use because of their natural resource characteristics. Acquisition of natural resource lands by the County as part of major park sites serves to preserve such lands and contributes to the aesthetic value of the park. Thus, there may be a need for more park land than indicated by strict application of the standard in order to provide needed recreational facilities while protecting park lands having important natural resource value. Additional park land is also needed to assure that major parks are distributed throughout the County in a manner that assures good accessibility to all County residents.

The plan also recommends that the County develop 110 additional linear miles of trails and that efforts be made to connect several existing trails within the County, specifically, interconnections through the City of Waukesha between the existing Lake Country and New Berlin Trails, developed by Waukesha County; the existing Glacial Drumlin Trail, developed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources; and an existing segment of the Fox River Trail, developed by the City of Waukesha. It is recommended that the County and City of Waukesha work cooperatively to identify and establish appropriate on- and off-street routes to connect these trails and provide proper signage and such improvements as safe drainage grates and improved railway crossings, where necessary.

It is further recommended that the County provide canoe-access points²⁶ to the Fox River within Fox Bend and Fox River parks.

Under the open space plan element recommendations, the County should acquire additional natural resource areas to assure the preservation of important areawide natural resource systems in the County, including the acquisition of an additional 11,300 acres of primary environmental corridors, about four acres of secondary environmental corridors, and about 25 acres of isolated natural resource areas, as indicated in Table G-3 in Appendix G.

It is also important to note that Waukesha County, in cooperation with the civil towns in the County, is responsible for the protection of natural resources in the unincorporated portions of the County. Under the recommended park and open space plan for Waukesha County, it is recommended that the County cooperate with the towns to preserve the important natural resource features encompassed by the primary and secondary environmental corridors and isolated natural resource areas through appropriate public land use regulation.

Local Units of Government

While the provision of major parks, recreation corridors, water-access facilities, and important natural resource features, including lands encompassed by the proposed parkways, are proposed to be County or State responsibilities, local units of governments should consult with the State and County to identify specific lands required for areawide park and parkway purposes. Once such lands are identified, local units of government should utilize their zoning and official map powers to reserve the needed lands in open space for

²⁶A Waukesha County Greenway Corridor Study, mentioned above, has been completed jointly by the Regional Planning Commission and the County. The study is intended to define more specifically lands along the Fox River and its tributaries which should be acquired by the County for resource protection and for recreation purposes and to identify areas within the primary environmental corridor that would be suitable for the development of trails, canoe-access sites, and such associated recreational facilities as parking lots and access roads. The study is described in SEWRPC Memorandum Report No. 40, Waukesha County Greenway Corridor Study, Towns of Waukesha and Vernon, May 1996.

eventual acquisition by the State or the County. Further, it may be appropriate for local units of government to accept in dedication certain lands identified for State or County acquisition as the land subdivision process proceeds and then transfer ownership of such lands to the County or State. Similarly, it would be appropriate for the County or State to assume the responsibility for the development of trail facilities in local parks, as needed, to assure continuity and uniformity in the proposed continuous regionwide system of recreation trails.

Acquisition and Development Priorities for Waukesha County

Priorities for the park and open space acquisition and development projects proposed for implementation by Waukesha County are presented in this section. It is necessary to establish priorities for park and open space acquisition and development because public financial resources available for acquisition and development are limited and, because implementation of the recommended plan as set forth herein will, as a practical matter, occur gradually, over time.

It is recommended that the County continue actively to acquire land for recreational and open space preservation purposes. Land acquisition is particularly important given the rapid pace of urbanization occurring within the County. County efforts to date to acquire park and open space lands at a reasonable cost and before their development for urban uses have been exemplary. It is recommended that priority for land acquisition be given first to lands needed for new major parks or for expanding existing major parks and parkways; followed by acquisition of other environmental corridor lands; and then of other park and open space sites.

Recommended priorities to the year 2010 include the acquisition of remaining major park sites and the acquisition of parkway lands, with emphasis on establishment of the Fox River Parkway and development of a trail within the parkway. It is also recommended that the County develop canoe-access facilities to the Fox River at Fox Bend and Fox River Parks and develop 18-hole, regulation golf courses at two major County parks by the year 2010. Acquisition and development activities and associated costs for the acquisition and development of major park sites during the 15-year period between 1996 and 2010, which are set forth in Table 162, are estimated at about \$23.5 million. In

addition to the costs related to the development of major parks, it is recommended that the County over the next 15 years provide an average of approximately \$100,000 per year for the acquisition of parkway lands, for a total cost of \$1.5 million. Acquisition and development activities and associated costs related to park system development included in the County capital improvements program for the five-year period between 1996 and 2000 are set forth in Table 163.

SUMMARY

The primary purpose of the park and open space element of the Waukesha County development plan is the preparation and presentation of a sound and workable plan to guide the acquisition and development of lands and facilities needed to satisfy the outdoor recreation and open space needs of the existing and probable future resident population of the County and to protect and enhance the underlying and sustaining natural resource base. Implementation of the recommended plan would assure the protection and preservation of environmental corridors and isolated natural resource areas in the County, and the provision of an adequate number and variety of park and open space sites and facilities geographically well distributed throughout the County, thereby meeting the existing and probable future recreation needs of the residents of the County.

The recommended park and open space plan consists of both an open space preservation element and an outdoor recreation and education element. The open space preservation element consists of three major components: preservation of primary environmental corridors, secondary environmental corridors, isolated natural resource areas, and parkways associated with the primary environmental corridors; preservation of natural areas and critical species habitat sites; and protection of open space lands located within the Department of Natural Resources project boundaries for the Lulu Lake Natural Area, the Lapham Peak and Southern Units of the Kettle Moraine State Forest, and the Vernon Marsh Wildlife Area.

Of the total 97,314 acres of recommended open space lands, 24,764 acres, or about 25 percent, were in public ownership, public-interest ownership, or in compatible private outdoor recreation use in 1995 and are recommended to be preserved in current ownership. It is recommended that an additional